



AMVETS RIDERS

Officers Manual

This Officers manual is intended to be a guide for Chapter and Department Officers. This publication is in no way intended to replace the Unified Constitution and By-Laws. If there is a conflict between the Officers manual and the Unified Constitution and By-Laws, the Unified Constitution and By-Laws prevail.

OFFICER’S MANUAL

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Group Tax Exemption

AMVETS enjoys tax-exempt status under Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Code, Section 501(c)(19), and its subordinate organizations at all levels may enjoy the benefits that this status offers, provided that the IRS mandates are fulfilled. All business entities are required to have employer identification numbers (EIN). In compliance with IRS regulations, every AMVETS post or subordinate organization must have its own EIN. The Application for Employer Identification (IRS SS-4 Form) is used to apply. The assigned EIN is used to identify the Chapter/Department when filing its annual IRS 990 Form. **The AMVETS blanket 501 (c) (19) Group exemption number is 0838.** This information can be found on the AMETS website: <http://amvets.org/wp-content/themes/amvetshq/docs/resources-501c19.pdf>.

Filing for an EIN number in itself does not make you tax exempt. This is simply for Federal Tax ID with the IRS. If you do nothing else you are taxable as a profitable business. You must apply under the AMVETS blanket C19 exemption to attain tax-exempt status with the IRS.

Organizational Structure

The AMVETS Riders has been growing rapidly since its beginnings. Our many members and Chapters located throughout the United States are proof that AMVETS Riders programs, goals and efforts are worthy of support. The annually elected and appointed officers at the National, Department and local levels work together to accomplish the AMVETS Riders mission. Each year, representatives from these levels attend the AMVETS Riders National convention held in August at a time and place selected by AMVETS to a previous convention, to make decisions on issues affecting veterans and the organization. The AMVETS Riders National Headquarters is located at the determination of the AMVETS Riders National President and approved by the National Executive Board. Contact information for the National Officers can be found on the Riders website www.amvetsridersnational.org and click the Officers tab to find the respective Officer.

National Organization

The National AMVETS Riders Organization will consist of National Officers elected by Rider Delegates and appointed by the National Riders President, as determined per bylaw structure.

The National AMVETS Riders will have the following Officers: President, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Judge Advocate, Sgt. at Arms, Chaplain, Liaisons Officer, and Communications Officer. National currently also has appointed a National Publications Officer and National Historian.

The National AMVETS Riders has no paid employees and are all volunteers that are elected or appointed each year at the National convention from the existing Chapters in the AMVETS Riders. National Officers may be requested by Chapters and Departments to attend functions such as Department Conventions or when there is a conflict that can't be resolved otherwise. When requesting a National Officer, please go to the web site www.amvetsridersnational.org and under the Publications tab, there is an official National Officers invitation. Please fill out and submit to the National Secretary so it can be dispersed to the appropriate National Officer. When traveling, each National Officer must gain the approval of the National Executive board and adhere to the National travel policy or that Officer will not be reimbursed.

National Executive Board

The National Executive Board is the senior functioning administrative level of the organization. The administrative power between National conventions is vested in the National Executive Board (NEB). The NEB is composed of the National President, Immediate Past National President, the National 1st and 2nd Vice Presidents, all other elected National Officers.

Nominations of National elected Officers will be made from the floor at the Mid-Year Rally meeting prior to the Annual Convention.

National Executive Committee

The National Executive Committee is responsible for working in support of the full board. The work of the committee involves.

- 1.) Handle urgent issues, resolving any emergency or organizational crisis.
- 2.) Perform policy work, carrying out specific directions of the board, and taking action on policies when they affect the work of the Executive Committee or when the National Executive Board directs the Committee to do so.
- 3.) Provide counsel, feedback, and support when needed.
- 4.) Help develop a strategic plan and Initiate the board's involvement in establishing a strategic framework or direction.

The National Executive Committee consists of the National Executive Board, National appointed Officers and Department Presidents.

Appointed National Officers are appointed by the National President and approved by National Executive Board. These Officers shall have no vote at any National Executive Board meeting.

Departments

Departments are chartered and governed under the provisions established in the AMVETS Riders Unified Constitution, Article V. The AMVETS Riders National President may grant a charter to a new Department, which has a minimum of three (3) Chapters and minimum of fifty (50) Riding members. At the next scheduled NEC meeting, the NEC ratifies the National President's actions. All Departments must maintain a minimum of 50 members in good standing (except departments whose charters were issued within the past two years or a variance is applied for and approved by the NEC for a period to be determined by the NEC, as referenced in the Unified Constitution, Article V, para. 5.6). Departments that fail to meet these minimum standards will have their charter revoked. A revoked charter must be returned within 30 days of notification from National headquarters. Departments are organized and function similarly to the National organization; however, their jurisdiction is limited to State boundaries.

Each Department must hold a convention (meeting) between May 1 and June 30 and complete its revalidation prior to July 15 each year. A Department Riders Convention shall be held annually during the AMVETS Department Annual Convention, at a time and place selected by The AMVETS Department. The AMVETS Riders Department Convention shall constitute the governing body of the AMVETS Riders Department. Elections shall be held at the Annual Convention, at a time and place to be announced no later than one hour prior to start of the Convention. The voting will be done by hand or by voice.

Departments shall collect their Chapters' dues and rosters and send them to the Riders National Secretary no later than March 15th each year. Departments shall collect their Chapters' dues and rosters

and send them to the Riders National Secretary no later than March 15th each year. Chapters with no Department remitting dues after due date will be assessed a \$25.00 late fee. Departments shall fine Chapters if payment is late. Chapters failing to remit dues by April 1st shall be automatically suspended. Suspended Chapters may be reinstated, no later than June 1st by submitting a complete membership roster, dues, \$25.00 late fee, and a \$50.00 reinstatement fee. Chapters failing to reinstate by June 1st shall be subject to a vote of revocation by the Riders Delegates at the Riders Annual National Convention.

Each Department Officer should carefully review Article XI of the AMVETS Riders Unified By-Laws to become familiar with his/her responsibilities. For the purpose of determining voting eligibility at an NEC meeting, each Department must be revalidated with the National Riders headquarters and meet its minimum membership requirements. Each Department will elect and/or appoint Officers in accordance with Article VIII of the Unified By-Laws. A complete staff of Officers includes a President, a minimum of two Vice Presidents, Judge Advocate, Finance Officer, Sergeant at Arms, Secretary, Chaplain.

State (Department) Executive Board

The State Executive Board is the senior functioning administrative level of the Departmental organization. The administrative power between State conventions is vested in the State Executive Board (SEB). The SEB is composed of the Department President, Immediate Past Department President, the Department 1st and 2nd Vice Presidents, all other elected Department Officers.

Nominations of Department elected Officers will be made from the floor at the SEC meeting prior to the Annual Convention.

State (Department) Executive Committee

The Department Executive Committee is responsible for working in support of the full board. The work of the committee involves.

- 1.) Handle urgent issues, resolving any emergency or organizational crisis.
- 2.) Perform policy work, carrying out specific directions of the board, and taking action on policies when they affect the work of the Executive Committee or when the National Executive Board directs the Committee to do so.
- 3.) Provide counsel, feedback, and support when needed.
- 4.) Help develop a strategic plan and initiate the board's involvement in establishing a strategic framework or direction.

The Department Executive Committee consists of the Department Executive Board, Department appointed Officers and Chapter Presidents.

Appointed Department Officers are appointed by the Department President and approved by Department Executive Board. These Officers Shall have no vote at any Department Executive Board meeting.

Chapters

Chapters are the fundamental units of the AMVETS Riders. A minimum of five (5) eligible AMVETS, Sons of AMVETS or AMVETS Ladies Auxiliary members may form an AMVETS Riders Chapter, Support members shall not be included as Charter Members as they can only join an existing Chartered Chapter. Application for a Chapter charter customarily is made to the Department and, on approval, is forwarded

to National Headquarters. The forms required to start a Riders Chapter can be found by selecting the Publications link on our website amvetsridersnational.org. Where organized Departments do not exist, Chapter charter applications should be forwarded directly to the National organization. Each Chapter charter is issued in accordance with Article IV of the AMVETS Riders Unified By-Laws. Chapters are governed by the Unified Constitution and Bylaws as well as by their chosen or elected officers and committees. Each AMVETS Riders Chapter shall be the judge of its own membership, subject to the provisions of the Unified Constitution and Bylaws.

Chapters must revalidate to the Riders Department or National headquarters if no Department, no later than 1st of July each year to maintain their Charter. Chapters should submit to Department Headquarters a copy of their most current IRS tax filing with the revalidation paperwork, (990, 1023, 1024).

Chapters shall remit National dues and Department dues (if applicable) and a complete membership roster to their respective Riders Department no later than March 1st each year. If no Riders Department exists, National dues and roster shall be sent to the Riders' National Secretary no later than March 1st each year.

Chapters with no Department remitting dues after due date will be assessed a \$25.00 late fee. Departments shall fine Chapters if payment is late. Chapters failing to remit dues by April 1st shall be automatically suspended. Suspended Chapters may be reinstated, no later than June 1st by submitting a complete membership roster, dues, \$25.00 late fee, and a \$50.00 reinstatement fee. Chapters failing to reinstate by June 1st shall be subject to a vote of revocation by the Riders Delegates at the Riders Annual National Convention.

Only members in good standing with a current valid membership may hold an office, continue in office, and be seated as a delegate, be entitled to vote, represent themselves as an AMVETS Rider, or wear the Riders' uniform and insignia.

In the event of a Chapter folding either by charter surrender or revocation a member who was in good standing at that time shall have no longer than ninety (90) days to transfer to another Chapter. If any member affected by this closing is a Department or National Officer, they may continue to hold said office for that ninety (90) day period. If after ninety (90) days any member has not transferred their membership privileges are terminated.

SOMETHING TO REFLECT ON..... Handle the business of the Riders organization at the meetings, speak your piece, make your point, and **LEAVE IT AT THE MEETING**. Use your Post Club room and rides to enjoy the companionship of your fellow members and friends.

Membership

Qualification for membership:

Before a membership application can be approved, they must be a member in good standing* of AMVETS, AMVETS Ladies Auxiliary, or Sons of AMVETS. Riding Members must be the legally registered owner of a motorcycle or be the spouse of the legally registered owner of the motorcycle. Riding membership eligibility may also be accepted in States and/or County jurisdictions that acknowledge joint ownership and/or registration to persons that are not legally married. Multiple names such as boyfriend, girlfriend, friend, or relative may be listed on the title or registrations in these jurisdictions.

The operator of the motorcycle must be the Riding member that actually has the legal motorcycle endorsement, and listed on either the title or registration along with the unrelated owner (Unified Constitution, Article VII, para. 7.2). Riding Members must provide proof that they are legally permitted to operate a motorcycle in their respective State, a valid State motorcycle registration, and proof that they are insured in accordance with the laws of their respective State. This information shall be shown to the Chapter President and one other Chapter Elected Officer. The security of this personal data shall be maintained.

Spousal members will be exempt from the requirements of Article V Section 5.2 B provided their spouse has met said requirements. Only Riding members of the organization shall hold an elected office at any level of the AMVETS Riders.

The AMVETS Riders will recognize individuals who display a desire to help support veterans through the AMVETS Riders Organization. These individuals shall be known as AMVETS Riders Support Members. These Support members must belong to an existing Chartered Chapter of AMVETS Riders. Support Members must be a member in good standing of AMVETS, AMVETS Ladies Auxiliary, or Sons of AMVETS. The dues structure will be the same as Riding members, and they will have a voice and a vote at the Chapter level. Support members may hold appointed positions within the Chapter level only and be recognized by wearing a "Support member" patch on the vest.

Honorary membership shall not be granted. In lieu of this, certificates of merit may be awarded to those rendering distinct service to the community and the American veterans who have served or are serving in the Armed Forces of the United States during and since World War II. Chapters, Departments, the NEC, the National headquarters or the National convention body may make such awards. Awards requested by Chapters must be approved by the Department's Executive Committees.

The membership year shall be in compliance with the AMVETS National Constitution and By-Laws. Riders' dues for the coming year will be accepted starting December 1st. It is the Chapter's responsibility to collect and forward its member's dues, as well as assuring that members are in good standing with their parent organization.

No member may be affiliated with more than one Chapter at the same time. However, members may belong to one Post and be an AMVETS Rider at another Post if they obtain permission from the AMVETS Post where the Riders Chapter is located.

A current Chapter member in good standing may request to transfer to another Chapter. The Chapter Transfer Form is available on-line at www.amvetsridersnational.org or from the Riders National Secretary and in compliance with the Unified Bylaws Article 5.13.

Rider Members, who become disabled while a valid member and can no longer ride a motorcycle, SHALL be considered a member of this Organization. Rider Members who become widowed while a valid member SHALL be considered a member of this organization as long as they remain members in good standing with the parent organization AND the Chapter. An existing Rider who becomes temporarily disabled or incurs a personal hardship that would keep them from owning, registering, or insuring a motorcycle may file for a hardship status change that would allow them to maintain their Rider status. This hardship status may be granted for a maximum of 18 months at which time their status would change to Supporter. They must remain a member in good standing with both their parent organization

as well as the Riders organization. This must be accepted and approved by the Chapter President. Disabled, widowed, and hardship members must complete paperwork that will document the requirements and conditions of each of the three exemptions. This paperwork will be available from the National Riders Office or on-line at www.amvetsriders.org under the membership status change tab.

Individual members that have not paid current year dues by July 1st will be dropped from the membership roster for said year, and must apply for membership for the next year as a new member.

Members who desire to expand their involvement and express their views in Department and National affairs may also seek appointments to Department and National committees.

Members-at-Large

The AMVETS Riders do not recognize members-at-large (MAL) at this time. The AMVETS Riders organization encourages its members to be active with the Post that the Chapter belongs to as we are all "AMVETS FIRST".

Procedures

Discipline

Guidelines for the suspension or expulsion of a member are identified in the Unified Bylaws Article XX;

20.1 DISCIPLINE

- A.) Disciplinary rules relative to Chapters and Departments are prescribed in Appendix A.
- B.) Disciplinary rules relative to Chapter members are prescribed in Appendix B.
- C.) Disciplinary rules relative to National, Department, and Chapter Officers are prescribed in Appendix C.
- D.) Procedures for Hearings shall be prescribed in Appendix D.

20.2 Members may be suspended or expelled for any of the following reasons:

- A.) Failure to comply with obligations imposed on the members in this Unified Constitution and By-Laws.
- B.) Any conduct unbecoming an AMVETS Rider that reflects unfavorably on AMVETS or the AMVETS Riders.

Nominations and Elections

Within 30 days of the election or no later than the 1st of July, Chapters must forward the revalidation form that is found on the website amvetsridersnational.org, to the Department and National Headquarters stating the names of their newly elected officers. Department revalidation must occur no later than July 15. Elected and appointed officers may be installed and assume office no later than July 15.

Nominations

The first round nominations of Officers to the Chapter/Department are made at the meeting prior to the Annual convention. Chapters are one month before annual meeting, Departments at SEC prior to Convention, and National is at the Mid-year Rally. The selection of delegates for the National Convention should take place during the regular annual meeting.

To qualify as a voting delegate or act as an alternate at the National convention, an AMVETS Rider must be in good standing with his Post and Chapter based on the Dues and Remittance form submitted to

National prior to July 1st of each year. The Unified Bylaws recommend that candidates running for office receive a simple majority (more than half) of the votes cast to be elected. When more than two candidates run for office and neither receives a majority on the first ballot, the run-off election is usually between the two candidates receiving the highest votes. Each candidate should be given the opportunity to decline the nomination. When nominations and elections are held during the same meeting, the following procedure should be used:

Chairman: "Nominations are now in order for the office of President."

First Chapter Member: "I nominate Rider Munoz."

Second Chapter Member: "I nominate Rider Leatherwood."

Third Post Member: "I nominate Rider Fortin."

Note: Nominations do not require a second.

As nominations are made, the chairman will ask each nominee if he will accept the nomination.

Chairman: "Are there any further nominations? Are there any further nominations? Are there any further nominations? Hearing none, nominations are closed."

Note: There may be a motion to close nominations, in which case it must be seconded and passed by a majority. A motion to close nominations cannot be debated; such a motion is not in order until a reasonable time has been allowed.

The chairman then reads the list of nominees who have accepted and announces: "We will now proceed to the election of Chapter Officers".

Department and Chapter Riders will have the following elected officers: President, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President, Treasurer, Judge Advocate, and Sgt. at Arms.

At a minimum a Secretary and a Chaplain will be appointed but other Officers may be appointed as the executive board feels is necessary. Chapters that have fewer than (10) members may reduce the number of Officers as long as the Chapter has the ability to properly function and may find the need to have Officers carry more than one Office, although it is not recommended that any one member hold two elected offices at any one level in the organization.

All AMVETS Riders Department and Chapter Presidents may hold office for two (2), one year terms and shall not succeed themselves. However, they may be elected again if no one runs for the office, or if the person is re-elected by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of delegates present. All other Department and Chapter Officers shall have no term limits.

National Officer Qualifications

To be elected as a National Officer, you must have been an Elected Department Officer for a period of (2) two years AND either attended (2) two National Meetings (Mid-Year or Convention) or sat on a National Committee for a period of (2) two years **OR** have held a National Appointed Office for a period of (2) two years.

The qualifications to hold a National Appointed Office are as follows: No qualifications required.

The qualifications to hold the Office of President are as follows: Must have held a National Elected Office for at least (2) two years.

The intent of these qualifications is to ensure that anybody that wants to run for a National Office has the experience required and the knowledge of the policies and proper procedures. It is not meant to discourage anybody, but to be used as a tool in gaining knowledge of how the National AMVETS Riders operates.

Votes will be by hand or by voice.

Department Officer Qualifications

Departments shall come up with and vote on their own qualifications to be eligible to run for a State level office. These qualifications should be included in the Department Standard Operating Procedure and submitted to the National Judge Advocate for permanent record.

Officers and Their Duties

The Officers are the cornerstone of a Chapter and the entirety of a Department leadership core. Each Officer should knowingly and willingly take a position to improve the organization. Accepting these positions is a great responsibility and every Officer should be willing to learn to be the expert in that position and start learning the next position ahead of you so when you start “moving up in the chairs”, you will have an idea of what to expect.

President

The President, as the senior executive Officer, shall preside at all meetings and the executive committee but may delegate a Vice President to serve as a temporary substitute when needed. The President is an ex officio member* of all committees. The President directs and supervises the activities of all elected and appointed officers and committees. The President will ensure that the membership meets regularly on the appointed dates. It is the President’s responsibility to disseminate, to the membership, all pertinent information that is sent from the Department and National Headquarters, in addition to announcements at meetings. The President should have an understanding of all the positions the Officers hold under him.

The President, or a member appointed by him, shall represent the Chapter at memorial services and community functions, where it is customary that AMVETS Riders or a veteran’s organization be represented. The President shall be the official spokesman on all matters of public interest concerning Riders activities. The Communications officer may be called on to assist with press releases, position statements and speech preparation. The position of President is filled in regular elections as prescribed by the Unified Constitution and Bylaws. It is customary to elect two Vice Presidents who may be assigned duties by the President or executive committee.

Use your authority wisely. Do not hesitate to use your gavel to maintain order at all meetings. Do not allow personal conversation to interfere with business, however, each person who wishes to speak on a subject should be allowed to do so. The majority rules when a vote is taken, but remember it is the right of the minority to be heard. The President is the face of the Chapter and Department; you should act accordingly and take the position seriously. All eyes are on you and how you conduct yourself in public

wearing our vest. You are the Quarterback of the team; you set the tone of how your Chapter or Department conducts themselves and how involved they are. If you are rude or disinterested, your Chapter will be also. You can't make everyone happy all the time but you must recognize the will of the members.

In the absence of the President, the Vice-Presidents in order of their rank shall preside at meetings and represent the President.

1st Vice President

The 1st Vice President will be responsible for the keeping of accurate membership records and shall ensure that all monies collected through memberships or renewals are forwarded immediately to the Treasurer. The 1st Vice is also responsible for insuring membership compliance of the Chapter members with their respective parent organization and distribute the Riders membership stickers to the eligible members prior to your respective convention. The 1st Vice President shall facilitate incentives and drives, to ensure continued growth throughout the Riders. The 1st Vice President shall make a report at each general membership meeting of the current, up-to-date membership standings and forward this report to the Secretary for inclusion in the meeting minutes. The Chapter 1st Vice shall remit National dues and Department dues (if applicable) and a complete membership roster to their respective Riders Department no later than March 1st each year. If no Riders Department exists, National dues and roster shall be sent to the Riders' National Secretary no later than March 1st each year. Departments shall collect their Chapters' dues and rosters and send them to the Riders National Secretary no later than March 15th each year.

The status of your Chapter or Department relies on the 1st Vice to get the Dues Remittance form and the Revalidation form to National so your Chapter or Department doesn't owe late fines or even face suspension. The 1st Vice President shall perform other duties as assigned by the Executive Board or the President.

2nd Vice President

The 2nd Vice President will monitor the Riders programs and coordinate with the National and Department 2nd Vices to ensure the AMVETS Riders Organization is fully utilized in the conduct of National Programs as directed by the National AMVETS Riders and AMVETS. The 2nd Vice President is responsible for the input of the Programs onto the AMVETS programs reporting site which can be found at the bottom of every page on the www.amvetsridersnational.org web site. Programs reporting fall into two (2) semiannual periods. The 2nd Vice is responsible for ensuring that all of the Chapter's Programs and activities are inputted prior to December 31st and June 30th for each respective period. AMVETS does give a 30 day grace after each semiannual period to allow getting all the programs in for the correct period. On Page 33, there is a Programs Reporting Guide. The 2nd Vice President shall perform other duties as assigned by the Executive Board or the President.

Treasurer

Responsibilities include receiving membership dues, banking, disbursement of monies and accounting for all funds. The Treasurer will sign all checks only after payment is authorized. Credit card management and use rules are essential to conducting digital business. The Treasurer should collect all monies due the Chapter/Department and keep an account of receipts for each member. All members in arrears should be notified personally. He should see that all funds are secured in a bank account.

Before a new Treasurer assumes his duties, his predecessor must have been given a “clean opinion” by the auditors, the audit committee, or the finance committee. (The new finance officer does not want to become involved in any problems that existed prior to his appointment.) The Treasurer should make a financial report at all regular meetings (to be included in the meeting minutes) and prepare a complete financial statement and budget to report at the annual meeting. He should also report to the membership on all receipts collected and on all bills outstanding and paid. Major expenditures, and those not within the current budget, should first be reported to the executive committee and at a meeting.

The Treasurer may be assisted and guided by a finance committee of three or four members appointed by the President with the approval of the executive committee. The primary duty of a finance committee is to assist in the preparation of the annual budget. A separate audit committee shall be formed in the same manor to perform an audit of the books annually. The President, being a member of all committees by virtue of his office, may assist the finance committee.

An important function of the Treasurer is to coordinate his duties relating to membership with the 1st Vice or membership contact. The Treasurer receives and dispenses all money and should work with whomever is responsible for membership accountability. At least once each month, he shall transmit to the Department (or in the case of a non-department state, to the National headquarters) any monies collected from annual dues during the preceding month. Transmittal or remittance forms provided by the AMVETS Riders National Headquarters shall accompany such payment.

One ledger sheet per month can be used to show all transactions. There should be a separate column for each account. The account balances at the end of each month should be carried forward as the beginning balance of the next month. Reconciliation of your bank statement to your cash account is required. The balance in the checking account should always agree with the total cash balance recorded in the general ledger.

The Chapter/Department must have a bank account. When officers are changed, the newly authorized signatures must be given to the bank via appropriately completed signature cards. The officers who will sign the checks on the account must sign the signature cards. Many banks will give a veterans organization an account that will be free from service charges and other fees, and the Treasurer should inquire about the bank’s policy toward veterans groups. When opening a new account, the Treasurer must take the adopted resolution, which instructs that a bank account is to be opened to the local bank along with the Chapter/Department's Federal I.D. number (EIN).

The resolution may read as follows:

“Be It Resolved: That the Treasurer of AMVETS Riders Chapter (number), Department of (state), be instructed to open a checking account in the name of the above Chapter at a local bank of his choice. Checks on the above account must have the signature of the Treasurer or the signature of either the President or Judge Advocate of the above-named Chapter.”

All Levels of the AMVETS Riders are required by the bylaws to have the Treasurer bonded in a sum at least equal to the amount of the liquid assets for which he may be accountable. The bond does not take the place of insurance in any way. It pays only for loss due to fraud or dishonest acts of the person bonded.

Budget: Every level, small or large, should have a balanced budget. A balanced budget means that income (or all cash received) and expenses (or all cash disbursed) are equal. This is the only way to handle the finances of the Chapter or Department.

When it is time to prepare the annual budget for the Chapter/Department, the finance committee meets to review all income and expenses during the past year and recommend a budget for the coming year. In developing a budget, consideration must be given to the long- and short-range goals of the Chapter. The Chapter finance committee should meet at least two months prior to the annual meeting to set up a budget. Copies of the recommended budget should be distributed to the membership during the finance report at the annual meeting. It is every member's right to know where money is being spent. After the adoption of the budget by the membership, it is the Treasurer's responsibility to insist that the Chapter limit its expenditures to the budgeted items within the anticipated income. This will provide stability and build a financial reserve for unanticipated expenses while maintaining a balanced budget.

Bonding: Bonding is mandated in the AMVETS Bylaws, Article VII, Section 1: All National, Department and Post/Chapter officials handling funds in excess of \$5,000 shall be properly bonded with a good and solvent bonding and surety company, acceptable to the United States Treasury, as surety to cover the average amount of AMVETS Riders funds, handled by such individual in a single year. In case of delinquencies in the payment of accounts due the Department or National Headquarters, action shall be taken at once by the proper officials to bring about an immediate and complete settlement. The National Executive Committee shall approve the bonds provided by National officials, and the Department Executive Committee shall approve those provided by Department and Chapter officials.

Changeover: Prior to the annual meeting, the Chapter's books must be in good order so that an adequate financial report can be made and the books turned over to the newly elected Treasurer. In the transition, the new Treasurer should provide a written receipt to the retiring officer on the surrender of the post books and monies. The Treasurer shall perform other duties as assigned by the Executive Board or the President.

Judge Advocate

It is the responsibility of the JA to interpret all aspects of the Unified CBL, ensure that all actions of the Chapter/Department are within the AMVETS and AMVETS Riders guidelines and in the case of disciplinary actions; act as the prosecutor for the hearing.

The Judge Advocate is responsible for drafting the Chapter's and Department's Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for presentation to and adoption by the general membership. The original SOP, together with any changes, additions or corrections must be sent to the Department Judge Advocate for review, approval and forwarding to the National headquarters. The National Membership Department maintains a permanent file of important documents on each Chapter. A Chapter/Department will adopt its own SOP, provided the provisions are not in conflict with the Unified Constitution and Bylaws. A sample Chapter SOP is provided as an addendum to the Unified By-Laws. The Judge Advocate shall perform other duties as assigned by the Executive Board or the President.

Sergeant-At-Arms

The SGT-AT-ARMS is responsible for keeping order at meetings. SAA's should know that they are responsible/have the authority to maintain order at meetings and to remove unruly members. Sometimes, meetings can get heated and the SAA will need to take charge of the floor and be the eyes of the President to keep members from turning an otherwise orderly meeting into chaos. The SAA is responsible for the care of colors and shall perform other duties as assigned by the Executive Board or the President.

Chaplain

The Chaplain is a member of the President's staff and acts as advisor and consultant to the President in all matters relating to religion, morals, and morale as affected by religion. The Chaplain assists the President and his staff with integrating the principles of good moral conduct and citizenship in the Chapter. He represents religion which teaches fortitude, reverence and justice, as well as kindness, sympathy and humility. It a part of his official duties to be aware of members who are sick or have passed on and his responsibility to stay in contact with the family. If the family wishes to apply for the Riders death benefit, the Chaplain will assist with the process and be the liaison for the family to the Riders National Chaplain. The Chaplain is responsible for keeping a list of deceased members to report and memorialize at the Annual meeting. The Chaplain is also responsible to report the membership and/or request aid for sick or ailing Chapter members. The Chaplain shall perform other duties as assigned by the Executive Board or the President.

Secretary

The Secretary provides the administrative support for the Chapter and is charged with taking minutes and maintaining all records (in conjunction with the Treasurer). The Secretary is also responsible for correspondence and handles the routine business of the Chapter. The Secretary is the official contact person for the Chapter/Department and serves as the liaison officer between the Chapter and its community, the Department and National Headquarters. Among the Secretary's responsibilities:

- Maintain the Chapters electronic roster. Ensure membership numbers and e-mails are current for all members and leaders. Each member's file should provide all the information given on the original application: name, address, home and work phone numbers and date of acceptance into AMVETS Riders.
- Maintain records of current and past officers. Forward a new list of officers to the Department and National headquarters within 30 days of the election. Any changes made on the Chapter level must be documented and forwarded to the headquarters no later than July 1;
- Update a member's record when addresses or e-mails change. E-mail membership when a member passes;
- Keep the membership informed of all Chapter functions and activities. Ensure that all members are notified in advance of the time, place and date of Chapter meetings. Take particular care to ensure that all members are properly notified at least 30 days in advance of all elections of officers, change in CBL, etc.;
- Be present at all meetings (or have an assistant in attendance) to record all business transacted and report on the minutes of the previous meeting or Executive Committee meetings;
- Present all communications and correspondence at regular and Executive Committee meetings;
- Keep a complete record of the Chapter's property, including a description of the item, it's estimated value, its location and any other pertinent information deemed necessary. This, however, should not be interpreted as conflicting with procedures already established by the Chapter for custody of the property;

- Apply to the IRS for an employer identification number (EIN), by completing SS-4 Form and filing IRS 990 Form as required;
- File all correspondence according to the subject matter. Keep copies of all letters sent to the Department and National Headquarters; and
- Maintain separate files for members, correspondence, D&R Forms as well as for Chapters publicity and fundraising programs and any other topics relating to Chapters activities.

The Secretary shall perform other duties as assigned by the Executive Board or the President.

Communications Officer

AMVETS Riders as an organization is an international "brand" that is shaped and characterized by its very members. The value of the AMVETS Riders brand within our communities is bolstered by an informed and engaged public of the special and outstanding activities sponsored by AMVETS Riders. Equally, the members themselves must know of the issues and activities occurring within AMVETS and AMVETS Riders. It is the job of the Communications Officer to be the conduit between the members, the organization and community, and to enhance the prestige of the Chapter and AMVETS Riders. This role requires someone who will stay informed and actively help keep others informed and engaged both within the Chapter and AMVETS Riders, as well as the community. There are many communication avenues and tools available and the AMVETS COMMUNICATIONS MANUAL serves as a guide for the Communications Officer. The Communications Officer shall be responsible for the planning, formulation, and development of a communications program, including, but not limited to, publicity, organizational publications, promotional material, and Riders internet website. The Communication Officer shall be responsible for efficient and proper liaison with all communications such as media-press, radio, motion pictures, periodicals, television, and all forms of advertising.

The Communications Officer is the person responsible for maintaining the social media policy. The policy can be found on the web site amvetsridersnational.org under the publications tab. The Communication Officer shall perform other duties as may be assigned by the Executive Board or the President.

Publications Officer

A Publications Officer is mainly responsible for the collection and verification of publications within a group. This role is responsible for producing a wide range of items, ranging from web pages to promotional items such as leaflets, brochures, postcards, banner stands and adverts. The Publications Officer can be the administrator to a Chapter or Department web page and ensure the timely update of all the information contained on that site. The Publications Officer should work closely with the Communications Officer and the JA to ensure that whatever is published is within the guidelines and By-Laws of the AMVETS Riders and social media policy. The Publications Officer shall perform other duties as may be assigned by the Executive Board or the President.

LIAISON OFFICER

The Liaison Officer shall coordinate all Riders' activities, events, and runs with the AMVETS Executive Committee. The Riders Liaisons Officer shall coordinate with and keep the AMVETS, Auxiliary, and Sons of AMVETS informed of all Riders activities to insure timely responses on Riders activities or questions. The Riders Liaison Officer shall coordinate with any and all motorcycle groups to further the interest of the AMVETS Riders. The Liaison Officer shall perform other duties as may be assigned by the Executive Board or the President.

Historian

The Historian is a person who studies and writes about the past and is regarded as an authority on it. The Historian is concerned with the continuous, methodical narrative and research of past and present events as relating to the AMVETS Riders. In addition, they shall compile from year to year all records of historical value and interest for AMVETS Riders. Riders Historian Officers from all levels of the Riders shall unify to compile this historical data.

They use a variety of sources in their work, including institutional records, newspapers, photographs, interviews, films, and published manuscripts, such as minutes, letters, and other primary source documents. They also process, catalog, and archive these documents and artifacts. The Historian is responsible for past and current documentation of the AMVETS Riders and will work closely with the Publications Officer with the recording and documentation of all events. The Historian shall perform other duties as may be assigned by the Executive Board or the President.

Road Captain

Road captain is the name for the rider who coordinates a multiple-bike ride. Road captain can refer to both the leader and the sweepers who, among their other duties, check that other riders are safe. Working as part of a team, the road captain is responsible for the safety of the riders and the smooth running of the ride itself. Duties include planning, thinking ahead, communication and rider education. The road captain may even act as a tour guide.

Planning the Ride

A Road Captain is a fundamental part of any ride planning. Especially where riders may number in the dozens or even hundreds, he has to be well versed in the route. He must know about potential hazards, road conditions and any special events that are happening at the time of the ride. A Road Captain will ride the route a few days in advance to make sure that nothing has changed, will keep an eye on the weather, and will also be present at ride planning meetings.

Educating and Informing Riders

The Road Captain is expected to brief the group before the ride. He will inform riders about the pace of the ride, tell them about staggered formation, and will explain what the rules are. Some rides require the participants to ride together in tight formation, while others have a more loose, "at your own pace" style. The Road Captain will also answer questions and educate new riders in hand signals and other riding etiquette. Finally, the road captain will let riders know what to do should they break down or have a mishap, and might have a tactful word in the ear of a rider whose behavior is causing problems.

Leading the Ride

The Road Captain leads the ride. Riders are expected to keep an eye on him for cues as to where to go next. Working in conjunction with blockers or sweepers, the Road Captain will also help to block off intersections to allow riders to pass without worrying about traffic. He will then pass back to the front. Sometimes the Road Captain stays in front and only the blockers do the intersection work, and sometimes he works with the blockers. When a lane change is performed, the leader signals the change and the rear guard initiates it. This prevents lane-changing bikes from crashing into one another and also

provides a safer block to traffic. Indicators are seen from the rear and a large column of bikes changing is less likely to be cut off.

Stop Coordination

At gas and fuel stops, the Road Captain will set up in a staging area he has previously chosen so that the line of bikes can assemble. After leaving, the road captain will wait until the rear guard signals that everyone is ready to go before accelerating to highway speed.

Other Duties of the Road Captain

Other duties of the Road Captain including dealing with the police and other unexpected surprises, and making sure everybody have a fun, safe ride. The Road Captain is part of a team that includes the sweepers and rear guard, and is, by definition, an experienced rider. The Road Captain has full authority to remove individuals from the ride for reasonable reasons to keep the ride safe.

The President and Road Captain may appoint Assistant Road Captains as necessary. The Road Captain shall perform other duties as assigned by the Executive Board or the President.

Immediate Past President

The Immediate Past President is regarded as an advisor to the current or new President. His duties are to remain on the executive board and maintain continuity and contacts for the Chapter/Department. His position is not meant to be over the current President but to act as a member of the board with experience, knowledge and wisdom. A dedicated Immediate Past President will pass on any and all information about the organization that will be helpful to the sitting President. The Immediate Past President shall perform other duties as assigned by the Executive Board or the President.

Revalidation

As a tax-exempt veterans' service organization, the National Department, each recognized State Department and all Chapters must observe federal, state and local laws as well as our own Unified Constitution and Bylaws. Our document mandates that each entity complies with the annual charter revalidation process outlined in the AMVETS Rider National Unified By-laws, Article IV, Section 4.4: Every Chapter shall be required to revalidate its charter annually prior to July 1. Such charter revalidation shall be evidenced by an appropriate device to be issued by National Headquarters. In order to revalidate such charter, each Chapter, aside from any other requirements imposed in the Constitution and Bylaws, shall—

- a) Furnish National and its Department headquarters with a fully completed and certified Chapter Revalidation and Officers form;
- b) File Internal Revenue Form 990, 990M or 990EZ for the Chapter calendar or fiscal year with the United States Internal Revenue Service as required by current IRS regulations, and note same on the Revalidation form;
- c) Furnish National Headquarters with a copy of the Chapter's current Standard Operating Procedure or a certification stating the copy previously submitted has not been amended;
- d) Be fully paid up in all Chapter accounts with the Department and National Headquarters;
- e) Have at least Five (5) members in good standing at the time of revalidation; and
- f) Provide National Headquarters a copy of the Chapter articles of incorporation if applicable.

Quality Chapter Awards

Quality Chapter awards are awarded to Chapters that have shown initiative to become a better Chapter than they were last year, this is a prestigious award that Chapter members can wear proudly on the front of each one of their vests with year tabs.

Certificates will be awarded at the National Convention. If a Chapter or Department representative is not at the Convention, the certificate will be mailed to the Chapter President directly and Vest patches may be purchased through the AMVETS Quartermaster at amvetsnationalquartermaster.com.

Meetings

Before the Meeting

Well in advance of the meeting, the President should check with the Secretary to ensure that all Chapter members have been notified of the time, date, place and tentative agenda of the meeting. He should also check that any planned programs following the meeting were announced. He should review, condensing where possible, all the material that will be presented at the meeting, organizing it according to the Order of Business as described in the subsequent paragraphs.

The chapter meeting is called to order when the President raps the gavel three times. Usually two raps signal the membership to rise once. One rap directs the membership to be seated. Also, at the end of the meeting, one rap means the meeting is adjourned. Memorial services for departed members are an important part of the annual Chapter meeting, Department convention and National convention.

During the Meeting

The President is the chairman of all Chapter and Executive Committee meetings. In his absence, the 1st Vice President acts as the chairman. If neither of these officers is present, another officer can call the meeting to order. A temporary chairman should be elected to preside until the President or Vice President arrives. The chairman is in charge of the meeting and must see to it that the meeting starts on time and that the business is carried out in an orderly fashion. He must keep order, explain matters that are not clear, and see that each member has a fair chance to participate in the discussions and decisions. The Unified Bylaws state that a certain number of members, known as a "quorum," must be present before a legal meeting can be held.

The chairman calls the meeting to order by rapping the gavel three times and announcing, "The regular meeting of the AMVETS Riders Chapter (number) will now come to order." He should then proceed with conducting the meeting's agenda in the following order:

- Posting the Colors
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Invocation
- Read the AMVETS Riders "Mission Statement" as per the Unified Constitution.
- Roll Call of Officers
- Minutes of the Previous Meeting and the Executive Committee Meeting
- Introduction of Guests
- Applications for Membership and Initiation of New Members
- Reports of Officers, Committees and Delegates
- Old Business
- New Business

- Good of the Chapter
- Benediction
- Retiring the Colors
- Adjournment

Every meeting may not have business under each item. The above agenda is rather a guide for the chairman to ensure that all necessary business is conducted correctly and efficiently. The chairman must listen carefully when the Secretary reads the minutes of the previous meeting, so that he can note those items, which must be acted on either because they were left unfinished or because reports are expected from committees or officers. When he can, the chairman should also note items of new business that he knows should be conducted.

When special items of business come before the meeting, the chairman may suggest changes in the agenda or the omission of certain items such as the reading of minutes, in order to save time. This may be done only with the body's consent. Chapter meetings should be limited to one hour. In special situations, a two-hour meeting may be allowed if necessary; however, long meetings discourage members from coming back.

Posting the Colors:

If the colors are posted with only the United States flag, there should be a guard on both sides of the flag bearer. If both the U.S. flag and the Post or Chapter standard flag are used, the standard flag is carried to the left of the U.S. flag as the flag is moving in a direction, with a guard on the outer side of each flag (or to the front and rear of the flags when it is necessary to walk single file in a narrow aisle or area). The U.S. flag is always to the fore, top or right of any other flag or pennant and the Post or Chapter flag should never cross in front of it. Never have an armed guard without uniform caps. If posting colors, follow the protocol listed within the AMVETS Officer manual under "Posting the colors". The U.S. Flag should always be on the presenters or speakers right side. In other words, on the left side of the speaker as viewed from the back of the room.

Generally, the U.S. flag is already posted and in place. At this time, the SGT-AT-ARMS will give the command "Present Arms," at which time the Pledge of Allegiance will commence, and the command following the Pledge of Allegiance is always "order arms".

Pledge of Allegiance:

"I pledge allegiance, to the flag, of The United States of America, and to the Republic, for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

Riders Prayers:

The chaplain should give the invocation and may substitute their own prayer appropriate to the meeting or say as follows:

Invocation

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the freedom to gather together as AMVETS Riders. We thank you for the men and women who have sacrificed to give us those freedoms. We ask you to guide our thoughts, our words and our actions. Be with us and help us to bring you glory as we conduct the business of the AMVETS Riders. Amen

Benediction

Lord, thank you for your guidance and the good work being done by these AMVETS Riders. Be with our Brothers and Sisters in uniform serving around the world, give them strength and keep them safe. As we leave today, we ask that you go with us and keep us safe in our travels. Thank you for your mercy and grace, and may we bring you glory in all we do. In your name we pray, Amen

Mission Statement:

The chairman may read The AMVETS Riders mission statement or the entire Chapter/Department can recite it as follows:

“We the AMVETS Riders are a dedicated and patriotic group of motorcycle riders who hold true to an unwavering respect for our Nation, our Flag, and our Military... past, present, and future. We are committed to the freedom of this Nation, to provide community service and fellowship, and to preserve and support the aims and goals of the AMVETS National Organization.”

Roll Call:

When the roll call of officers begins, all officers should stand. The Secretary then reads the names of each officer and the SGT-AT-ARMS responds, “Present,” or “Absent,” as the case may be, when each name is called. Once counted present, the officer can be seated. After the roll call, a motion to excuse or not excuse the absent officers shall be made. If an Officer has called the President or presiding Officer and given a valid excuse, as determined by the Executive Board, a motion to excuse the missing officer will be made and voted on. Any Elected Officer who misses two (2) meetings, without prior notice, and without good cause, to be determined by the Executive Committee, shall be removed from office without any further action, notification, or hearing. The vacated position shall be filled in accordance with the guidelines prescribed in the Unified Constitution and By-Laws.

Reading the Minutes:

The minutes of last meeting and any executive committee meetings held since that meeting should be read. The minutes should be an accurate account of what business was conducted, including

- The kind of meeting (regular, special or executive committee).
- The date, time and place of the meeting.
- The name of the chairman and Secretary and, where the bylaws require it, the roll call of officers.
- The action taken on the minutes of the previous meeting.
- Summaries of committees and officer reports and the action taken on them.
- The text of all motions made and seconded the name of the maker and the action taken on the motion. When the vote is by show of hands or roll call, the exact vote for and against the motion should be entered. It is not necessary to record the debate, although some Secretary’s include the main points made for or against important motions.
- The time of adjournment.

The minutes should be typed or written in ink and bound in a book with strong covers. To get all important business recorded, the Secretary should take notes during the meeting or tape record the meeting and then copy the minutes into the permanent minutes book. This should be done as soon as possible so that notes do not get "cold." The Secretary should sign the minutes of each meeting. After the reading of the minutes, a motion to accept or amend and accept the minutes as read is required.

Introduction of Guests:

When the chairman introduces a guest speaker, he should include in the introduction, the name of the speaker, his title or qualifications and the subject of the speech. The chairman may call on a committee chairman to make the introduction, especially when the talk has specific reference to that committee. Remember, the shorter the introduction, the better.

Membership Report and New Member Initiation:

The 1st Vice President gives the membership report. The report identifies the members current on dues and addresses the efforts being made to secure renewals and new members. During this report, applications for membership are voted on and new members are introduced to the Chapter. If the new member is present, you may send him out of the room to take your vote. It is acceptable to call a short recess so that a proper welcome may be extended to the new members.

Programs Report: The 2nd Vice President should at each meeting, report all reportable programs that the Chapter and membership has participated in during the past month.

Other Reports:

The Treasurer should give a report, including a statement of the Chapter's financial condition, complete with itemized income and expenditures and the Chapters' banking balance.

The Chaplain reports all the names of sick and needy AMVETS Riders members, veterans and members' dependents. Events such as marriages, births and deaths in members' families should also be noted.

The Communications Officer should report on any promotional programs the AMVETS Riders have participated in or publicity the organization has received since the last meeting. All publicity should be preserved as valuable history of AMVETS Riders and the Chapter.

A motion to accept all of the Officer reports shall be made at the conclusion of all Officer Reports.

Unfinished/Old Business:

Any pertinent issues that were left unresolved in previous meetings or considered important to the Chapter's welfare can be discussed at this time.

New Business:

Any important business that has yet to be discussed in the meeting can be mentioned at this time.

Good of the Chapter:

During the "Good of the Chapter" announcements, the members may bring up matters pertaining to the welfare of veterans or the community that require no action to be taken. Educational and entertainment features are often presented during this portion of the meeting rather than waiting for a formal adjournment.

Benediction:

The chaplain should make the benediction. He may substitute his own prayer appropriate to the meeting or say the following benediction: "Let us pause this moment that each of us, in the faith of his own heart, may hallow the memory of those, our fallen comrades, who made the supreme sacrifice, and gave their lives on the altar of patriotism to a great and grateful America." (Pause 30 seconds.) "God of all consolation and all mercy, may those comrades ever sleep in the bosom of Thy love. And do Thou bless us, our loved ones, our comrades, and our fellow man everywhere, now and evermore. Amen."

Other prayers may be substituted so long as they are non-denominational.

Adjournment:

Following a motion to "Adjourn", which DOES need a second and a majority vote, The SGT-AT-ARMS will ask everybody to stand, give the command "Present Arms, wait five seconds to show respect, then command "Order Arms.

The chairman adjourns the meeting by rapping the gavel once and saying: "I now declare this meeting of AMVETS Riders Chapter (number) of the Department of (state) adjourned. Our next meeting will be at (time) on (date)."

After the Meeting, the period immediately following the meeting is an ideal time for committee members to meet and discuss their efforts, and for the President and other officers to organize the notes they took during the meeting. These officers should also use this time to identify what matters should be addressed at the next meeting. Guest speakers and social events can also be scheduled for this time.

Committees

There are two general types of committees; a standing committee and a special committee. A standing committee is one that continues to function throughout the year and deals with all matters that come up within its jurisdiction. One of the most important standing committees is the Executive Committee, which has the responsibility of carrying on the Chapter's business between meetings and planning the Chapter's activities. This committee is primarily made up of the Elected Officers, although it may also include appointed officers. Its duties are generally outlined in the SOP's of the organization. Other standing committees deal with special needs such as the membership, programs or fund raising.

Conducting Business

Once a committee is selected, the Chapter may elect a chairman or the committee can choose its own chairman. The committee should also select a secretary and, if the group is large, a vice or co-chairman.

It is impossible for the entire committee body to accomplish all its business at regular meetings; therefore, committees should meet regularly to conduct their business and organize their efforts.

The chairman is responsible for the proper functioning of the body, seeing that it meets regularly, that the members are notified of meetings, that reports are made properly and so forth. In committee meetings, the chairman also plays an important part in the discussions.

One of the advantages of a small committee is its informality. In large committees, it is nearly impossible to enjoy informal procedures and it becomes necessary to use the rules of parliamentary procedure. In a small group, the rules of parliamentary procedure are liberalized. There can be discussion without a

motion; a member may speak as often as he desires, and it is not necessary for him to rise when speaking. This informality makes it possible to discuss each matter thoroughly and reach a mutual agreement. All motions should be put to a vote unless there is a unanimous agreement.

Reports:

Committee reports should be written clearly or typed, and recommend action. The committee secretary usually writes the report; however, the chairman gives the report. Progress reports without any specific recommendations can be made orally by the chairman or by a selected committee member.

Acting on the Report:

After a committee has given its report, the members attending the meeting may vote to “accept” the report if they are satisfied with it. When the report of a committee includes several suggestions, or recommendations for action, the members may act on all recommendations at one time, or on each recommendation separately through the motion process. The body also has the option to “reject” the report, in which case the matter is left as it was before the committee acted. If the members are not satisfied with the report but feel that the committee can do better, they may “commit” the report, with or without instructions to the committee.

Majority and Minority Reports:

When a minority of committee members does not agree on a report, they may submit a “minority report.” The members, however, should listen to the minority report; if there is any objection, the matter should be put to vote without debate. The body acts on the report of the majority, unless a motion is made to substitute the minority report for that of majority, in which case the discussion proceeds on the minority views. If such a motion is defeated, the body then acts on the majority report.

Uniforms and Insignia

The AMVETS Riders uniform consists of a Black Riders patched vest, Red AMVETS, Auxiliary, Sons, or AMVETS Riders dress shirt (long or short sleeve,) black or blue colored jeans, slacks, or skirt in good condition. These Uniforms are Mandatory at all National and Department meetings. Uniforms may be more relaxed at the Chapter level due to weather or work requirements. The decision to wear the uniform at a Chapter level meeting may be voted on at the chapter level and outlined in the chapter SOP.

Official AMVETS Riders berets are different, depending on the title of the member:

- CHAPTER OFFICERS AND MEMBERS: Black beret with the AMVETS Riders patch.
- DEPARTMENT OFFICERS: Tan beret with the AMVETS Riders patch.
- NATIONAL OFFICERS: Red beret with the AMVETS Riders patch.
- NATIONAL PRESIDENT: Light blue beret with the AMVETS Riders patch.
- PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENTS: Royal blue beret with the AMVETS Riders patch.

The Crossed Sabers of the Cavalry, (gold in color, worn to the left of the Riders logo patch on the appropriate color Beret) will identify Past Riders Officers. The crossed sabers will be used by all Past National Officers, Past Department Officers, and Past Chapter Officers when wearing a Color Beret from past office. Past Officers shall not wear past officer insignia while holding an office in the Riders at the same level when a qualifying past office was held. The member will wear the beret of the highest office held.

The AMVETS Riders uniform and Beret should be worn at all AMVETS Riders functions. Additionally, they should be worn at all patriotic events and when cooperating with, or participating in observances of other veteran's military organizations. The Beret should be worn indoors and outdoors; however, it should be removed when entering a church. To properly hold the AMVETS beret during prayer, simply grasp the cap lengthwise in the right hand with the insignia showing, insert four fingers inside the cap and place it over your heart.

At no time will any type of profanity, be it graphic, or written, be displayed on any article of clothing bearing the AMVETS name. No patches with the number 1% or 13 or the letters MC, nor any patch denoting or insinuating a motorcycle club will be worn on any article of clothing. No organizational patches for any other organization shall be worn, with the following exception only a small patriot guard patch. Don't be the guy that in public a Mom with her daughter has to try and explain what a bad word means.

FRONT OF VEST

Members may wear other patches and pins on the FRONT of the vest as long as they do not conflict with the Unified By-Law Article 13. The American flag will be worn on the top left side and be the highest item on the vest. On the right side of the vest, a 2" or 3" Hat patch for (AMVETS. Auxiliary, Sons of AMVETS). These are the only mandatory patches on the front of the vest. A POW/MIA patch may be worn above the Hat patch but must be lower than the American Flag patch on the vest.

BACK OF VEST

The front and back of vest or jacket will be determined by buttoning or snapping the vest front and placing it on a flat surface. The back will be considered to be everything seen when the front closure is facing down and centered, likewise the front will be everything seen when the vest or jacket is placed flat on its back and centered. Riders are authorized to purchase 8", 10" or 12" RIDERS LOGO patches in the approved multicolor Red, White, Blue, and Gold color with Gold trim. The patch is authorized to be worn on the back of vest or jacket and will be centered.

The first Chartered Chapter in a State will decide on rocker lettering, color, and wording. This will be the "Standard" for all other Chapters in that Department. All center patches and rockers must be purchased from the designated National AMVETS Quartermaster. Absolutely no back patches that have been altered in ANY way are authorized to wear while representing the AMVETS Riders.

If Rockers are desired not to be worn, or a change in style desired by a Chapter or a Department, they will first seek the approval of the National AMVETS Riders by submitting a variance request to the National Secretary and the Secretary will submit the variance request to the National Executive Board for approval or disapproval. Until the variance is approved, Riders may wear a plain black vest with no patches on it.

Unified Constitution and Bylaws (CBL)

The Unified CBL is the most important document that the membership develops and adopts. It lays out the ground rules for members to follow. The rights and responsibilities established must be fair and understood by all the members. Beyond what the Unified CBL does not cover, each Chapter and Department must create a Standing Operating Procedure. A current copy of the Unified CBL can be found on the website www.amvetsridersnational.org under the Publications tab.

Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)

The Judge Advocate is responsible for writing, maintaining, interpreting and updating the SOP. The SOP is not meant to be a copy and paste of the Unified CBL, but a unique document of the day to day operations of the Chapter/Department and can be changed at any regularly scheduled meeting then voted on by the membership. The SOP must be forwarded to the Department Judge Advocate for review and approval after which it is sent to AMVETS Riders National Headquarters for placement in permanent files. An example SOP is found in the back of the Unified By-Laws.

Why Parliamentary Law?

Because AMVETS Riders meetings are conducted according to the newest edition of "ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER," each Chapter should have a copy of this publication available at every meeting. The highest-ranking officer, usually the President, serves as the meeting's chairman.

- The chairman must maintain an orderly meeting, so that all business transacted is discussed and follows proper sequence. No member should speak unless first recognized by the chairman.
- The President, when presiding, always accedes to the will of the majority of the members present. It is not his place to insist on points against the decision of the members. Rules for meetings enable the business of the Chapter to get done efficiently while at the same time protecting the rights of all the members.
- Only one issue at a time is addressed.
- All members can freely debate each proposal presented to the Chapter.
- All members have equal rights.
- The will of the majority is carried out, yet the minority has the right to present its case.
- The motions put forward should serve to accomplish organizational goals and promote the welfare of AMVETS and the AMVETS Riders. A separate section of this manual discusses Robert's Rules of Order in more detail (page 35).

Flag Etiquette

When wearing the beret, the hand salute is used during the posting and retiring of the colors, the Pledge of Allegiance or any occasion when called for in the same way as when the military uniform is worn. It is appropriate to salute even as a Sons of AMVETS or AMVETS Ladies Auxiliary as well as Veterans, when in Proper AMVETS Riders Uniform.

When wearing the U.S. flag, certain rules apply. The following information was published by the Institute of Heraldry, United States Army, as revised Oct. 20, 1976:

- Wearing a flag pin: The lapel flag pin, being a replica, should be worn on the left side near the heart.
- Wearing a flag patch: When worn on the right shoulder sleeve, it is proper to reverse the design so that the uniform is to the observer's right to give the effect of the flag flying in the wind as the person passes. When worn on the left shoulder sleeve, it is customary to position the flag with the union (blue field) uppermost and to the observer's left. In other words, the union is always forward when it is displayed flat against a surface.

Wearing of the U.S. Flag on the Riders vest falls within the first rule as wearing the pin. It is a replica of the flag, not the actual flag.

AMVETS Riders Ceremonies

Each President should understand and make full use of AMVETS Riders ceremonial rituals. All ceremonial functions should be carried out with dignity. Those participating in the rites should study and rehearse the procedures and memorize their lines. The Pledge of Allegiance should open all ceremonies.

If observing the room from the rear of the hall, the U.S. flag should be posted to the left and the Riders colors to the right. The colors should be placed towards the back of the officers.

Before the opening ceremony or the exemplification of any AMVETS Riders ceremony, the SGT-AT-ARMS must ascertain that only AMVETS Riders members or honored guests are present. He should then report his findings to the President. Any member entering the hall after the meeting has opened shall salute the flag and take a seat at the rear.

Activation and Dedication

The complete activation ceremony, used at formal inaugurations of new Chapters or Departments, is divided into two parts: activating the Chapter and installing the officers. The ceremony may be slightly changed to allow the former officers of a Chapter to install the elected officers. The ceremony for installing officers should be used for all annual installations.

The State activation committee should be comprised of three persons:

- The President (or officer authorized to conduct the ceremony).
- The SGT-AT-ARMS (or officer to act in that capacity).
- The chaplain.

At a scheduled time and place, the activation committee should meet publicly with the new Chapter's members and elected officers and conduct the ceremony. Prior to opening the meeting, the colors must be placed in their proper position; all ceremonial equipment is placed on a stand or small table located near the speaker's rostrum or the altar. If symbols of office are not used, the portions of the ceremony referring to them should be omitted. The use of symbols such as a gavel, however, is recommended.

Activating the Chapter:

The activation officer should make a short address about AMVETS Riders and its Mission Statement. On conclusion of the address, a messenger, usually the elected Judge Advocate, steps to the speaker's platform and presents the activation officer with the new Chapter's petition for activation. The messenger should address the activation officer as follows:

"Sir, I have been instructed to inform you that AMVETS Riders Chapter (number) of (city, state) has received authority from The National AMVETS Riders and the Department of (state) and is desirous of becoming a duly activated and dedicated Chapter and that the officers of this Chapter be designated and recognized by AMVETS Riders National Headquarters and AMVETS Riders Department of (state). We are now gathered together for this purpose and await your pleasure."

He hands the petition to the officer, who states:

"Fellow Riders, kindly inform your brothers-in-arms that the wishes of your Chapter of AMVETS Riders will be complied with without further delay, and that the Chapter will be activated and dedicated and its

officers installed; and for the members of your Chapter to present themselves for this purpose immediately.”

The messenger then retires and returns with the elected officers and members of the new AMVETS Riders Chapter. Members neatly arrange themselves before the speaker’s stand in rank and file up with the elected officer in the front rank. The messenger and the elected President then step before the speaker’s platform and the messenger informally introduce the President to the activation committee.

The elected President then addresses the activation officer in the following manner:

“Fellow Riders. A number of Riders have worked to establish an AMVETS Riders Chapter in (city, state). We have made application to the National AMVETS Riders and have been granted a charter. We now elect to be duly installed in accordance with the rules and regulations of the AMVETS Riders organization.”

He hands the charter to the activation officer who, after looking over the charter, responds: “With the greatest of pleasure, sir, I will proceed to comply with your request.”

The Judge Advocate reads the charter for all assembled to hear. (The elected President should hand the charter to the acting Judge Advocate and retire to his group.) All are seated while the acting Judge Advocate reads the charter. Then the activation officer says:

“AMVETS Riders, (All members of the Chapter rise.) I have found your request to be reasonable and in order, your charter is granted and approved by duly recognized authorities and you have complied with all regulations. Therefore, I now charge that this Chapter of AMVETS Riders become active and enjoy the benefits to be derived from such activity; that the Chapter will hold meetings at regularly stated intervals, all in accordance with the Unified Constitution and Bylaws of the AMVETS Riders, and that you will perform such duties as are required thereby. I now return your charter.” (He returns the charter.)
“Preserve it well and perform with all seriousness the tenets contained therein. I now declare this Chapter of AMVETS Riders to be duly activated. The chaplain will now offer a dedicatory prayer.”

Installation

Before the officers of a new Chapter can be installed, preparations must be made for the ceremony, with responsibilities carried out as follows:

The President should

- Meet with the Communications officer to discuss who will be the guest speakers and how long each will speak (the Communications Officer should make sure that press releases are sent out and media coverage is arranged);
- Send an invitational letter to the speakers and officers being installed;
- Send invitations to the AMVETS Post, Department Officers, AMVETS Auxiliary and the Post Sons of AMVETS.
- Make detailed plans to include refreshments.

The installing Judge Advocate should

- Compile a list of names and positions of elected officers;
- Review and prepare for the ceremony;

- Explain to both the appointed officers and the elected officers just what he will do and what is expected of them (read the Mission Statement of the AMVETS Riders to the elected officers) and
- Tell the installing officer what has taken place and give him the list of elected officers.

The installing officer should

- Review the ceremonial procedures with the President; and
- Be prepared to notify the Department and the National headquarters after the ceremony is completed and to send in the completed officers form to the respective headquarters.

Procedures and Oath

Guests should always be invited to AMVETS Riders installation ceremonies. AMVETS Riders has no secret ceremonies or rituals; therefore, the public, prospective members and the families of members, should never be kept in the dark as to the aims, purposes and principles of AMVETS Riders. The installing officer should be a current or Past Chapter President, Department or National Officer, or a duly authorized officer of another Chapter, or Department. The retiring President assumes his position in the center of the platform or stage with the incoming officers seated to his left. The retiring officers, installing officer, honored guests and speakers are seated to the left so that when they rise to recite the AMVETS Riders oath they will be facing the U.S. flag, which is to the right of the platform.

The chaplain can say his own prayer or use the following invocation:

“Our Father, who are in Heaven, may Thy name ever be hallowed by the people of America, whom Thou has blessed as Thou has blessed no other people. Bless all nations; we beseech Thee that they may dwell together in peace and justice. Bless our nation that she may ever be strong and generous, right and victorious, among the family of nations on this earth. Bless us, banded together for good in this organization, that we may serve our nation and our fellow men well, in peace as in war. Bless, we beseech Thee, our fallen comrades and those whose price of patriotism causes them to suffer today from mental and physical disability. In Thy holy name, most humbly do we pray. Amen.”

The assembly should remain standing if The Star-Spangled Banner is sung or played after the invocation or if the Pledge of Allegiance is recited. One rap of the gavel signifies that the audience is to be seated. The retiring President then speaks to the assembly and gives a report on past activities of the Chapter and the duties that the new officers and members are to assume.

Oath of Office

The SGT-AT-ARMS leads the Officers to be installed to the rostrum with the exception of the President. The installing Officer retires the SGT-AT-ARMS and returns to the front of the rostrum. The installing officer raps the gavel once, signifying the start of the installation:

SAA: “I present to you the officers-elect, with the exception of the President and the chaplain of AMVETS RIDERS Chapter (#), Department of (name), for the purpose of installation.

“Installing Officer: “Fellow AMVETS RIDERS, you have been chosen by the members of your chapter to represent them in your respective capacities. Are you prepared to take your oath of office?”

Assembled Officers: “I am.”

Installing Officer: "Raise your right hand and repeat after me, using your name where I use mine." (Raps gavel three times; all stand)

Assembled Officers: (repeating oath):

"I (name)
solemnly swear
that I will support and defend
the Constitution of the United States
that I will defend and support
the United States from all her enemies
both from within and without
and that I will support and obey
the Constitution and
The Principles of the AMVETS RIDERS
and that I will carry out the duties
of my office to the best of my ability
so help me God."

Installing Officer: "You may lower your hands."

Installing Officer: "SAA, you will lead the President to this rostrum so that he may be installed."

SAA: (He leads the President elect to the rostrum.) (He salutes and takes two steps back, covering the President.)

Installing Officer: "You have been chosen by your fellow AMVETS RIDERS to lead them for the following year. The responsibilities will be great. Your leadership will be tested and questioned. Knowing this, are you willing to assume your duties and take your oath of office?"

Incoming President: "I am."

Installing Officer: "Then you will raise your right hand. Repeat after me, using your name where I use mine."

"I (name),
solemnly swear
that I will support and Defend
the Constitution of the United States
that I will defend and support
the United States
from all her enemies
both from within and without
and that I will support and obey
the Constitution and the Principles
of AMVETS RIDERS
and that I will carry out the duties of my office,
leading by example

and demonstrating the principles
of Loyalty, Respect and Brotherhood
to the best of my ability so help me God.”

(Gavel is rapped once; all are seated.)

Installing Officer: “SAA, you will escort the President to the rostrum.”

(The SAA complies.)

“You have been elected to the highest office that this Chapter can bestow upon any member. This office exemplifies authority. Use it wisely and with discretion. Congratulations.” (The installing officer hands the gavel to the new President) “Having complied with our rules and regulations, with the power vested in me by the National AMVETS RIDERS, I hereby declare AMVETS Riders CHAPTER (number), Department of (state), duly and legally installed for the years 20__ and 20__.”

(The SGT-AT-ARMS salutes, does an about face, salutes the installing officer, does an about face and retires.)

Once this has been done, the installing officer thanks the Chapter, Post and audience, and expresses his pleasure at performing the ceremony. The Sgt-At-Arms and the Chaplain (if a part of the installing party) also extend their thanks. The installing party then retires to places of honor on the platform and the newly installed President takes the chair and completes the meeting.

Funeral Rituals

Military funerals should follow the rituals as prescribed in the authorized publications of the various U.S. military services. Funeral services should be simple and in accord with the solemnity of the occasion.

Preparation: When the remains are to be interred in a local cemetery, the burial ritual should be conducted at the gravesite. Church or home services are best left in the hands of the family or spiritual advisor. If the Chaplain conducts the church or home service, the sermon is left to his discretion.

Funeral Escort: When requested by the family for the AMVETS Riders to perform a motorcycle funeral escort, it is customary to ask all the Veterans organizations in the area to participate. The Uniform is full Riders Uniform as per the Unified CBL (Red collared shirt, Vest and Beret).

Motorcycles will line up at the funeral home in front of the hearse prior to the funeral. Riders can stand a flag line if the deceased is a Veteran. This should be done at the front door, lined up on either side of the walkway. Flags will be held in the right hand and pulled into the shoulder and at the position of attention.

After the service, Riders will line up on either side of the walkway from the door to the hearse. When the casket or remains exit the doorway, the Rider in charge will call “Riders Attention”, “Present Arms” and all will render a hand salute. After the casket is placed in the hearse, the Rider in Charge will call out “Order Arms” and then proceed to the motorcycles.

If a Police escort is involved, Riders should line up in staggered formation behind the police car. The lead Rider shall keep an eye on the hearse to ensure he does not get too far ahead.

Once at the gravesite, Riders should park the motorcycles so as not to block traffic and proceed to the gravesite. If there are flags present, Riders should surround the grave and seats with the flags at the position of attention with the flag in the right hand and pulled into the shoulder.

Grave Site Ritual: All personnel at the gravesite except the active pallbearers follow the example of the officiating chaplain. If he uncovers, they uncover. If he remains covered, they remain covered.

Motorcycle flags: Riders may at any time display flags on the motorcycles. When flying the U.S. Flag, it shall always be on the Riders right side of the motorcycle unless flown alone. When flown alone or with two other flags, it shall be flown in the center.

Ritual for Retirement of Unserviceable Flags

This ritual provides for the retirement of unserviceable U.S. flags in a dignified manner.

- Participants, wearing their AMVETS Riders Beret, take their places as outlined below. The participants will consist of the President, 1st Vice, SGT-AT-ARMS, Judge Advocate, Chaplain, and additional members as needed.
- The SGT-AT-ARMS, with two persons acting as his aides, collects all the flags to be retired and makes a list containing the names of the donors.
- The flag should be folded in its customary manner.
- It is important that the fire be fairly large and of sufficient intensity to ensure complete burning of the flag.
- Place the flag on the fire.
- The individual(s) can come to attention, salute the flag, recite the Pledge of Allegiance and have a brief period of silent reflection.
- After the flag is completely consumed, the fire should then be safely extinguished and the ashes buried.
- Please make sure you are conforming to local/state fire codes or ordinances.

Programs

As they assume office, one of the first duties of the President and 2nd Vice is to review sponsored programs. They must develop a master plan complete with committee assignments), set goals, establish timetables, promote existing programs to their fullest potential, and consider and adopt new programs. These Presidents should begin by looking at National and Department programs modified to fit the Chapter's needs.

Successful programs not only help the community but also involve members in structured activities. A well-organized program that demonstrates an answer to a need will generate interest plus stimulate media coverage, while it increases involvement and promotes membership. The public relations officer should contact the newspaper, radio and TV stations to advise them about what is being planned, who is involved and what will be accomplished before, during and after the program. Remember to acknowledge and thank those who helped; a little recognition goes a long way. As each program progresses, document all pertinent information for future reference. Good records ensure continuity; therefore, additional copies should be made and given to the designated record-keeper to put on file.

To get volunteers, personally call on some members who were active before or who haven't been active at all. Tell them you need their help and get them involved. Look beyond your Chapter membership. Go to the Post, Auxiliary, Sons of AMVETS and Junior AMVETS who can provide assistance. Identify individuals who have similar interests and concerns. Also look to other community service-oriented organizations and individuals like the Legion Riders, VFW Riders, Combat Vets and ABATE. Get your entire community to rally behind your cause.

Lastly, if a program works, share it with other Chapters, Departments and National Headquarters via the website www.amvetsridersnational.org or other social media. It may be adopted nationwide. Keep in mind, however, that it may take weeks or months to plan and develop each program. Make it a success; plan the program well.

Programs Reporting Guide

General:

Sharing information is critical to the continued success and future development of AMVETS and AMVETS Riders Programs. Your reports become the basis of our report card as a Veteran Service Organization to Congress and the public at large as we work on behalf of veterans and this nation's citizens. AMVETS is a Congressionally Chartered Veteran service organization and as such we as an organization must report to Congress on our participation in our communities. The "Values" reported are utilized to give AMVETS a stronger voice on the congressional floor and add to the clout given to the National Commander to be heard on important issues concerning Veterans today.

It also fulfills an IRS accountability requirement we must meet as a tax-exempt organization at all levels. If a Chapter were to get audited, you must be able to show what you have done with your time and money to keep your tax-exempt status.

A consortium of over 500 volunteer organizations relies on the formulas of the Independent Sector. The Dept. of Veterans Affairs also uses these criteria to account for and report VAVS hours. Currently the figure is \$19.51 for volunteer hours. (Uncompensated workers.) And the mileage is determined by the IRS guidelines that authorize standard Volunteer Mileage Expense deductions, which is currently .14 cents and that is how we come up with the Programs Values.

Submission:

You have the capability of reporting online and submitting your records electronically. The online system is very user friendly and may be accessed directly using the report programs tab on the bottom of any page the www.amvetsridersnational.org website or the AMVETS National Website: www.amvets.org/amvets-in-action/reporting-programs. Your Department and National leadership will receive your online report immediately when you hit the submit button. User instructions are incorporated on the pages, however, if you still have questions or need assistance in utilizing the online reporting program; please call the Riders National 2nd Vice President. You may also contact the AMVETS Programs Department toll free at 877-726-8387, extension 4031, or download the Programs Reporting Manual at: <http://www.amvets.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Online-ReportingGuide.pdf>.

What not to report:

- Chapter meetings (including set up, take down, buying food/drinks, etc.)
- Hanging out at the Post canteen for comradery.

- Department/National conferences/SEC/NEC/Conventions
- Volunteer events for other organizations (i.e. if you volunteer at a Ladies Auxiliary event, because they claim it. We can't double dip).
- Coaching a little league team / volunteer activity such as volunteer firefighter, not directly related to your Chapter or AMVETS.
- Attending a luncheon for another organization
- Any volunteer hours served in the VA Medical Center or VA related center (health care centers, outpatient centers, veteran's homes, etc.) These hours are reported through the VA.

Activities to Report (Just a sampling):

- Attending a school or Eagle Scout meeting to tell students about the Americanism contest.
- Mileage and hours associated with any and all Military Funeral Honors
- Fundraising activities, including time, mileage and money spent buying supplies and setting up for the event
- Time spent taking a sick or hospitalized veteran to and from doctor's appointments
- All the volunteers and their hours for your events, even if they are from other organizations (i.e. American Legion Riders riding in your Poker run can be reported under your programs)
- Riding in a parade for Memorial Day with your AMVETS Riders vest
- Supporting and attending local Stand Downs in your area
- Mileage and hours for visiting Veterans in a retirement home
- Conducting or supporting Troop Return celebrations

Deadlines:

Chapters are required to make a report to their respective Departments at a minimum of twice each year. The six-month calendar periods are January through June and July through December. However, with online reporting, you may make your reports at any time and they will automatically be shared with your Chapter, Department and National Officers immediately. They will also be automatically included in the bi-annual National reports without any additional action on your part.

This Programs Guide has been designed to help you set up, run, and report programs for your Chapters and for Department 2nd Vices to understand what is required of the Chapters. Department 2nd Vices should strive to become the product expert to be able to help your Chapters, they deserve the best you can give them.

Social Media

The world is changing fast, and how we communicate is changing even faster. It is a growing phenomenon embraced by all generations. There are great benefits to today's technology and its widespread use, but there are also some risks.

What really constitutes social media? A definition of social media is any website or medium (including video) that allows for communication in the open.

Speak respectfully about the AMVETS Riders and our current and potential members. Do not engage in name-calling or behavior that will reflect negatively on the AMVETS or AMVETS Riders reputation.

Members can be disciplined by the organization for commentary, content, or images that are defamatory, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libelous, or that can create a hostile environment on any AMVETS Riders social media. Publicly viewed postings shall not be in a politically subversive nature as we are a NON-Patrician organization. The AMVETS Riders Social media Policy is on the National website www.amvetsridersnational.org.

ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER

Meetings shall be conducted according to the Bylaws, the National Constitution, as well as Robert's Rules of Order. It is the duty of the President to maintain an orderly meeting, and to conduct the meeting in such a manner that all business transacted or discussed shall follow in proper sequence.

The President, when presiding, **always accedes to the will of the majority of the members present** and it is not for him to insist on points against the decision of the members.

He should not allow discussions between members across the floor. No member may speak unless first recognized by the President. Each AMVETS Riders Chapter should have a copy of Robert's Rules of Order at each meeting, so there should never be a doubt as to procedures or decisions.

The rules of parliamentary law did not develop out of thin air, nor are they devices to complicate the business of meetings, as the new member sometimes thinks, when a barrage of "points of order," or "previous questions" confronts them.

Like the other rules, which govern modern society, those of parliamentary law are based upon actual experience. If each one of us made up our own traffic regulations, no one would be able to drive a car. In the same way there are rules for football games, for the payment of taxes, or the drawing of unemployment compensation, the building of houses, and almost every other activity in which we take part.

Rules for meetings enable the business of the AMVETS Riders to get done with speed and efficiency, while at the same time protecting the rights of all the members. To the newcomer they may seem confusing, until he/she learns them.

Just as you can't play baseball unless you know that three strikes are out, so you can't play your proper role in the functioning of the rules, which control its actions.

These might be stated briefly as follows:

1. Only one subject can come before the meeting at one time.
2. Each proposal coming before the AMVETS Riders shall be freely debated.
3. Each member has rights equal to those of every other member.
4. The will of the majority shall be carried out, yet the minority shall have the right to present its case.
5. The desires of the membership should be brought together in such a way that the welfare of the organization as a whole is served.

HOW BUSINESS GETS DONE

Unanimous Consent

The President should remember that a great deal of the business of the meeting can be accomplished by unanimous consent. For example, when the Secretary has finished reading the minutes, the President will ask, "Are there any corrections?" and then if none are made, "If there is no objection the minutes will stand as read, "or "as corrected," if corrections have been made.

This same procedure may operate with regard to communications and reports. In those instances, in which communications do not require action, the President may say, "If there is no objection, the letter will be received and filed," or in the case of a report, which contains no recommendations, "If there is no objection, the report will be accepted."

Many a meeting has been killed by a large pile of long-winded communications, read in a monotonous voice by a Secretary who isn't at all interested in what they have to say. This can be avoided by having communications go to the executive committee, which decides which of them shall be read to the membership, or by having the Secretary summarize the less important ones.

Motions

Whenever a body desires to take action on any problem it does so through the passage of some motion dealing with that question. Almost all of the activity of a meeting, therefore, revolves around motions and what happens to them, whether they are adopted, amended, defeated or postponed for future action.

Getting the Floor

No one has a right to talk at an AMVETS Riders meeting unless he/she has first been recognized by the President, that is, has been "given the floor." A member desiring to present a motion, or to speak on any question, arises and addresses the chair as "President." Ordinarily the President or SGT-At-ARMS recognizes the first member to rise, but when two or more arise at the same time he/she may use their own judgment. When a member has the floor the remainder of the group should sit quietly until he/she has finished. The President recognizes a member by nodding or pointing to them, or by calling out their name or position. Thus: "Rider Hatfield," or "the member in the third row."

Making the Motion

Every motion should begin with the words "I move that," not "I make a motion that," or "I move that you....."

Motions should be stated positively, that is in such a manner as to require some action.

Thus, it is not necessary to pass a motion "not to hold a picnic."

A motion cannot be made while there is another motion on the floor, with the exception of certain types of motions, which will be noted later.

Every motion must be "seconded" before it can be discussed. This is to ensure that at least two people in the meeting are interested in the motion. In some instances, a member desiring to make a motion will ask the privilege of explaining the subject matter and intent of their motion before making it. If there is

no objection from the body, the President may allow them to do this. Otherwise no motion may be discussed before being seconded.

In most AMVETS Riders meetings all that is required for a motion to second is for a member to call out "Second" in a loud voice, while remaining seated.

Stating the Question

When a motion has been made and seconded, the President should repeat it clearly, so that all members will know what is before the body. If the motion is awkwardly worded or confusing, the President, with the permission of the maker, should reword it so that its meaning will be clear. If the President believes the motion is "out of order" he/she should say so as soon as it is made. In repeating the motion, the President may ask the secretary to read it.

Discussion

When a President has finished stating a motion he/she should ask for discussion, thus: "A motion has been made and seconded," or "It has been regularly moved and seconded that this Chapter should put into effect the AMVETS Riders Veteran in need program. Is there any discussion?"

The maker of the motion is usually given the first opportunity to speak since he/she is the one who can be expected to give the best arguments for it. A member who has not yet spoken on the motion is given preference to one who has; in fact, except for the maker of the motion further explaining its meaning, no one should speak twice on a motion so long as there are some desiring to speak who have not done so.

It is a good practice for the President to alternate speakers for and against a motion. If he/she does not know on which side members wishes to speak, he/she can ask, "For or against?" and should be guided accordingly. A member who seldom talks should be given preference over one who speaks frequently. Discussion should be strictly limited to the matter before the meeting.

The President has the right to speak on a motion, but should not make a practice of long speeches from the chair, or otherwise dominate the meeting so that the members fear to express their own opinions.

It is best that the President speak only when he/she feels that there are certain implications in the motion, which have not been brought out by others, or feels that the matter is so important that he/she wants their position known before the vote is taken.

Amendments

Suppose the members are considering a motion which the members would like to see changed a little. That's the time when the amendment is used. The amendment may be offered at any time after the motion has been seconded and before the vote is taken. The mover of the amendment must get the floor in the same fashion as one wishing to speak on the motion, and the amendment must be seconded before it can be considered.

The maker of the amendment should state clearly what their amendment is, and to which section of the motion it applies. For example, the body is acting on a motion that "a picnic be held on August 15, with tickets at \$1 a couple." The maker of an amendment wishing to change the date would say, "I make an amendment that the date of the picnic be August 22 instead of August 15."

No Amendment can be made which is directly contrary to the motion. For instance, an amendment not to hold a picnic would be out of order.

Amend the Amendment

Just as it is possible to amend a motion, so it is also possible to change an amendment. Suppose the motion is that “the executive committee investigate the possibility of organizing a new Chapter in Smithville.” An amendment might be made that “a special committee be appointed to investigate, etc.”

Some members might feel that the committee should be elected, and so would move “an amendment to the amendment, providing that the committee be elected.” That is as far as the situation can go, for there can no amendment to an amendment to amendment.

When during the discussion it would appear that neither the original motion, nor the motion as amended will be satisfactory, the best plan is to offer a “substitute for the whole, “that is one motion to replace the original motion and the amendments.

It is important to note that while there can be an amendment to an amendment; there cannot be two amendments to a motion before the meeting at the same time. In the instance cited above, after the amendment had been made to appoint a special committee to make the investigation, it would be out of order to make another amendment asking, that the committee also investigate the possibilities of organizing another Chapter.

Once an amendment is before the body, the discussion is limited to the amendment until it is disposed of. A President can sometimes save time by calling upon the maker of the motion and the second and asking whether they would be willing to accept the amendment as part of the original motion. If they agree, and no other members objects, this can be done, saving time and energy.

Voting

When it appears that there has been sufficient discussion, the President may say, “Are you ready for the question?” And if no one desires to speak, the vote is taken. So long as anyone desires to debate, the President himself cannot close the debate. This can only be done by a majority vote of the body.

Before putting the matter to a vote, the President should make it clear just what the members are acting on—the motion, the amendment, and the amendment to the amendment, or the motion as amended, as the case may be.

Amendment First

When a motion with an amendment is before the body, the vote on the amendment comes first. If the amendment is passed the body then acts upon the motion as amended.

If the amendment is defeated, the vote then is on the original motion. Another amendment may be offered when the first has been disposed of. When a “substitute for the whole” is offered, it should be voted upon first. If adopted, the substitute then takes the place of the original motion, and becomes subject to debate.

In certain cases, it is not advisable to use the normal order for voting on amendments. There may be a motion to set up a committee of five, an amendment to make it seven, and an amendment of the amendment to fix the size to three. The best procedure is to vote on the largest figure first, with next largest, and so on.

In most instances, the members will first vote vocally by saying "Aye" or "No" in chorus with position seeming to have the most voices winning. The form is this: The President: "All those in favor of the motion say aye...those who opposed, no...the aye's have it and it is so ordered."

Show of Hands

When there is any doubt in the mind of the President or the membership as to which side has the majority, a vote should be taken by a show of hands. The phrase the President uses are:

"The chair is in doubt. We will vote by show of hands." Any member may call for a vote by show of hands by calling "division" from his seat. The chair should grant this request.

In voting by show of hands, the members raise their right hand as the President calls for the ayes and nos. If the group is a large one the President may appoint tellers who will count hands on each side. Otherwise the Secretary and the President can do the counting. The hands should be counted unless the results are so obvious as to be without question. In large meetings voters are often asked to stand rather than to show hands.

Acting on a Motion

Let's try to fill in the outlines we have given of motions, amendments, discussion and voting, by taking an actual instance of a local AMVETS Riders Chapter taking action on a problem that has been brought before it.

The President: "Is there any new business?"

Rider Mathers is given the floor.

"President, we have a very nice BBQ Smoker here, but we don't make enough to use of it. What's the use of keeping it?"

Making the Motion

First the President interrupts, "Rider Mathers, if you have any suggestion to make regarding the use of our smoker, please put them in the form of a motion. Unless there is a motion before the body you cannot speak."

"Then Mr. President," says Rider Mathers, "I move that the President appoint a committee to organize activities for our members to better utilize it. The reasons why we need such a committee_____."

Getting the Second

Again, the President interrupts. "Is there a second to the motion that I appoint a committee?" Several cries of "Second" are heard. "All right, Rider Mathers, now you may speak on your motion." "I only

wanted to say, "Mathers finally asserts, "that it's a shame to have a smoker as nice ours and not use it more regularly. At the same time, it's obvious that a committee could plan cook outs, and other affairs, which would be helpful to the AMVETS Riders. It looks like I could use a class in parliamentary law myself."

An Amendment

AMVETS Rider MEMBER Ritchie gets the floor. "I agree with Mathers that we ought to have a committee but I don't see much point in naming one unless we give it some money to spend. If we are going to have a worthwhile program we will have to be willing to pay for it. I, therefore, move to amend the motion that we appropriate \$200 for the use of the committee."

"Is there a second to the amendment?" There is a cry of "Second!"

"We will now discuss the amendment that we appropriate \$200 for the use of the BBQ committee, Rider Rithcie".

One thing at a time

"There are a lot of activities that we ought to start. For example, this Chapter has never sponsored a poker run which would benefit the member's greatly".

"Just a minute, Rider Quick, you are out of order. A poker run is a fine idea, but this isn't the time to discuss it. We are now deciding whether or not we should appropriate \$200 for the BBQ committee. Rider Nighorn, did you want to speak?"

"Yes. I noticed that the motion doesn't provide any size for the committee, so I would like to offer another amendment that the committee be composed of five members."

"Only one amendment at a time, Rider Nighorn, your amendment is out of order and cannot be accepted now. It is now proper only to offer an amendment to the amendment, such as that the amount to be voted be \$100 rather than \$200. Your amendment will be in order after we have acted on the present amendment."

A confused murmuring arises in the hall. "Quiet please," the chairman calls out. Rider Macdonald is recognized. "I don't think we should appropriate any money for the committee until we see what plans they have. Let's wait until they report back to us the next meeting."

Rider Ashe arises. "I don't want see why we want to bother with this BBQ business at all, after all it's _____."

Vote on the Amendment

The President: "Rider Ashe, you are out of order; you are talking on the main motion while we are discussing the amendment. Is there any further discussion on the amendment?"

"There being none we shall vote on the amount of money allotted for the committee. All in favor say aye...those opposed...no...the chair is in doubt. We will vote by a show of hands. Will the SGT-at-ARMS please act as teller? All in favor of the amendment will please raise their hands...those opposed..."

The SGT-at-ARMS counts and turns the results over to the President.

“The amendment is lost 76 to 60. The original motion is now before the floor. Rider Nighorn, you may now make your motion as to the size of the committee.”

Rider Mathers rises. “I’ll accept the motion as part of my original motion.”

“If there is no objection, the amendment will become part of the original motion. Is there any further discussion?”

We will now vote on the motion that the President appoint a BBQ committee of five to organize activities for the AMVETS Riders. All those in favor say aye...opposed, no. The ayes have it and the motion is carried.”

“I will name Cox, Nighorn, Quick, Macdonald, and Vanlanen as members of the committee.”

(In some cases, the President may desire to name the committee at a later time after giving the matter some thought).

“Is there any further new business?”

Keeping the Order

When a football player violates the rules the game he/she is penalized. In the same fashion, an AMVETS Rider member who does not abide by the parliamentary rules of the meeting finds themselves unable to function.

You have seen how he/she may be restrained and prevented from making motions or amendments. If he/she persists in being out of order the President may have them removed from the floor.

However, the rules of parliamentary procedure are not all simple, and it is not likely that every member will know all of the fine points. Therefore, it is the duty of the presiding officer, the President, to see that the rules are lived up to by calling them to the attention of the members as they are violated or are needed.

Thus, we have seen that he/she has forbidden a member to speak on a motion until it had been seconded, he/she has forced members to speak on the question before the floor, has seen to it that only one motion was before the body at a time, and otherwise seen to it that the rules of procedure were lived up to.

The Point of Order

However, there are times when someone violates the rules without the President noticing it. Or else the President may make a ruling which is felt to be wrong. In such a case, a member of the body may call it to the attention of the chair by raising a “point of order”.

A member wishing to call the attention of the chair to some violation of the rules of order does so by standing up in his place and saying, “Mr. President, a point of order.” Or simply, “Point of order.” He/she

may do this even though he/she interrupts someone else who has the floor. The President must recognize them, and ask them what their point of order is. The form is this:

“Point of order”,

President: “What is your point of order?”

“Rider Smith is not speaking on the question before the body.”

“Your point is well taken. Rider Smith, will you please confine your remark to the question before the floor?”

Or if the President disagrees:

“Your point of order is not well taken. Rider Smith’s remarks have a direct bearing on the question before the body. You may proceed, Rider Smith.”

It should be remembered that one of the worst enemies of a well-conducted meeting is the “point of order pest,” that is, the member who regards themselves as the expert on the parliamentary procedure and looks for opportunities to prove it. It is much better to keep quiet when the President has missed a minor infraction of the rules than to disrupt the meeting.

A point of order is not:

- An excuse to slow down a meeting.
- A convenient way to interrupt a speaker.
- An excuse to make a speech.
- An excuse to criticize the President.

Appeal from the Decision of the Chair

In most instances, the best thing a member can do when ruled out of order, or when their point of order is not recognized by the chair, is to keep quiet about it, and abide by the decision of the President. When, however, he/she feels that a grave injustice has been done them, or that the decision of the President was a definite violation of the rules of procedure, or that the best interests of the AMVETS Riders will be served, the member has a right to “appeal from the decision of the chair,” and have the whole membership decide if they or the President was right.

The appeal can be taken only immediately after the ruling has been made. It may be made by the member called to order, or any other member. The member announces:

“I appeal from the decision of the chair.”

After discussion, if any, the question is put to a vote by the chair in this fashion:

“All those in favor of upholding the ruling of the chair, say aye...Opposed, no...the chair is sustained.”

Or if the vote is the other way:

“The chair is overruled.” Immediately upon the decision of the appeal the business of the meeting is continued.

Point of Information

A member who feels that he/she needs certain information, either about the meaning of a motion, or its effect, or other facts to enable them to vote intelligently, has the right to ask for it at any time. He/she simply gets up and says, "Point of Information."

The President should recognize the questioner but he/she cannot interrupt another speaker. The questioner states their problem, and the President should answer it as well as he/she can. Sometimes the questioner desires information from another member. In such a case, the President should ask the one who had been speaking whether he/she will yield for the purpose of the question. He/she cannot be forced to do so. The questioner must address their question to the chair even though he/she wanted information from another member, thus:

"President, I wonder if Rider Reando can tell us how many World War II veterans work with them."

Parliamentary Inquiry

When the information that the member seeks has reference to the rules of parliamentary procedure this is known as a "parliamentary inquiry," – for example:

"Is it in order now to make a motion with reference to the problem of unemployed World War II veterans?"

The President's answers to such questions do not constitute decisions that can be appealed. Only a decision he/she would make after such a motion had been brought up would be subject to appeal.

How to Do, What You Want to Do

We have seen how a member acts in the normal course of events in dealing with motions and amendments. However, there are times when some unusual action is desired. This is accomplished by what is known in parliamentary law as "subsidiary" motions. They are intended primarily to help the handling of the business rather than to deal with it directly. Many of them differ from the motions for action which we have discussed in that they can interrupt a speaker, require no second, cannot be debated, or require more than a majority of the votes cast to be carried.

Prevent Something from Coming before the Body (To Object to the Consideration of a Question)

On occasion, a motion is made which deals with a matter the very discussion of which, it is felt, will cause ill feeling or friction, or be otherwise harmful to the body. A member who feels this way will arise immediately after the motion has been made, but before discussion has started, and say, "President, I object to the consideration of the question."

The President must reply:

"There has been an objection to the consideration of this question. Will the assembly consider it?"

The matter is then immediately put to a vote. There can be no discussion. If two-thirds of the members vote against considering the question, then it cannot be brought up again during that meeting.

A member desiring to “object to the consideration of the question” may interrupt another speaker. No second is required for the objection. It should be remembered, however, that this motion should be used only in exceptional cases:

Take Back Something You Have Started (Withdrawing a Motion)

After a motion has been made and seconded it becomes the property of the body, and cannot be withdrawn without its consent. The maker of the motion asks the President for permission to withdraw his motion, and the President puts the question before the members thus:

“If there is no objection the motion will be withdrawn.”

When an objection is raised the question of withdrawal must be put to a vote. It requires no second, cannot be debated, and requires a majority vote to pass.

Drop the Matter for the Present (“To Table” “To Lay on the Table” or “To Defer” “To Defer Indefinitely”)

Sometimes a member may feel that a motion under discussion is taking up too much time or that the motion is unwise and should be gotten out of the way without spending any more time debating its merits. In such a case, he/she makes a motion to “table the Motion,” or “to lay the motion on the table.” THIS IS AN IMPROPER MOTION!

This motion is intended to postpone action on a matter, in order to take up more pressing business. The proper motion to delay action on or dispose of a motion in these circumstances is to move to “defer the motion” or to “defer the motion indefinitely.” If more information is needed before a motion can be decided, the member would ask for recognition and, upon being recognized, state, “I move to defer the motion until we can receive additional information as to _____.”

If the object is to drop the matter altogether, the member would say, “I move to defer this indefinitely”. The President then asks for a second, and if the motion is seconded, puts the question of deferring to a vote.

A motion to table discussion on a motion in order to discuss an urgent matter is stated, “I move to table this motion in order to determine _____.” The President then asks for a second, and if a second is made, puts the question of tabling to a vote. There is no discussion on a motion to table.

A motion which has been tabled can be “removed from the table” as soon as some other business has been transacted. A member making the motion “to remove from the table” is recognized in the usual manner, and again the question is decided without debate, and by a majority vote.

The use of the “motion to defer” as a means of killing a measure to be discussed can be overdone by a reckless majority. It is a much wiser policy to close debate in the regular fashion (see below) and then defeat the motion, if that is the end desired.

To Limit or to Extend Debate

Only by action of the members themselves can debate on a motion be stopped so long as some of the members desire to speak. The body, however, can limit the amount of debate which shall be allowed, or stop it altogether. Motions to do this are made in the usual fashion, require a second and are not

debatable. They may be amended and are debatable only when they come before the body as a general rule for all questions.

Debate may be limited by setting a time when the motion before the house shall come to a vote, by limiting the number of speeches and the time for each speech, or by allotting a certain amount of time for each side of the question. In the latter case, members on the same side may get together to divide the time. In some Chapters it is the practice to have a standing rule in the by-laws fixing the maximum amount of time that a member may speak on any motion.

When there is a standing rule fixing the time for debate, or when the body has acted to limit debate, and it is found advisable that the time for debate be extended, this may be done by a motion similar to that limiting discussion.

In both cases, the maker of the motion to limit or extend debate must get the floor in the usual manner, and cannot interrupt someone who has the floor.

Stop Discussion and Take a Vote (The Previous Question)

When it is desired to cut off debate entirely, and come to a vote at once, the motion is the “previous question.” For the “previous question” to be moved it is necessary for the mover to be recognized by the President in the usual manner. The motion requires a second, and like the motion to limit debate it is not debatable and requires a two-thirds vote. The form is “I move the previous question,” or “I move that we close debate and vote on the question.” Immediately after the motion is made and seconded the President must put it to a vote thus:

“The previous question has been called for. Will those in favor say aye...opposed, no...”

In some organizations it is the practice to close debate when several members call out “Question” from their seats, showing that they are tired of the debate, and want to vote. This practice is proper in most cases, but should not be used when there are members who desire to speak. Then the motion for the “previous question” is the proper one.

Change a Previous Decision of the Organization (To Reconsider)

When it is felt that a body has acted hastily on some matter, or later events or new information indicate that the decision was unwise, the organization may decide to “reconsider” or “rescind” the action.

The motion to “reconsider” is used when it is desired to bring the whole matter up anew for discussion and action. It must be made on the same day that the vote to be reconsidered was taken. It must be made by someone who voted with the majority in the original instance, but any member may second it.

Motion to Adjourn

A motion is made to end the meeting. A second motion is required. A majority vote is then required for the meeting to be adjourned (ended). The motion to Adjourn is a privileged motion that is granted precedence over ordinary business because it concerns matters of great importance or urgency. Such motions are not debatable.

Note: If more than one motion is proposed, the most recent takes precedence over the ones preceding it.

Glossary of Commonly Used Terms and Phrases

Member or Member in Good Standing - A member in **good standing** is regarded as having complied with all their explicit obligations and paid dues for the current dues year. A member who has neither voluntarily withdrawn from membership nor has been expelled or suspended from membership after appropriate proceedings consistent with lawful provisions of the Unified Constitution and By-Laws.

The member has unabated powers to conduct their activities, which can include AMVETS Riders endeavors and continued membership within the AMVETS Riders.

ex officio member - Use ex officio to describe a position someone automatically gains because of another job or position the member already holds.

Hand Salute - Traditionally, members of the nation's veteran's service organizations have rendered the hand-salute during the National anthem and at events involving the National flag, only while wearing their organization's official uniform and head-gear.

(the) Chair - The presiding Officer.

On the Floor - A motion has been made, seconded and is the only subject under discussion.

Has the Floor - A particular person has the Chair's permission to speak and is generally allowed to continue until he is finished (unless he is out of order).

Point of Order - When a member believes the speaker is out of order, he may rise, and without waiting to be recognized, state, "Point of Order". The Chair must then stop the speaker and ask what the reason is. This is stated and if the Chair agrees, will correct the speaker. If he does not agree, the Chair will permit the speaker to go on.

Table a Motion - Action on the motion on the floor is voted to be acted on later at the same meeting.

Postpone a Motion - Action on the motion on the floor is voted to be acted on at a meeting at a later date, generally to allow more information to be gathered.

Body - The members present at any meeting.

Annual Meeting - The yearly meeting for the Chapter level of the organization at which time new officers are elected, yearly reports of all officers are given. Usually this will be in May, and is usually the last meeting before State Convention.

The Rostrum - The desk or platform where the presiding officer conducts the meeting. There are usually 2 or 3 other officers at the rostrum. This is usually the President, SGT-at-Arms and 1st Vice President.

Constitution & By-Laws - Also called the Unified CBL; these are the Rules which organize the AMVETS Riders.

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP'S) - Rules established by the Chapter, State Department and National organization which dictates how monies can be spent, Uniform codes, and other reasons allowed by the Constitution & By-Laws. Such Rules cannot be in conflict with the CBL.

S.E.C. State Executive Committee - Department Officers, Past Department Presidents and delegates in compliance with the Constitution, Bylaws and SOP's.

N.E.C. National Executive Committee - National Officers, Immediate Past National President, NEC Representatives from each Chartered Department.

PNP. - Past National President

IPNP – Immediate Past National President

RNP – Riders National President

RDP- Riders Department President

RCP – Riders Chapter President